

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a). Claims 5 and 8-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Applicants have cancelled Claims 1-7. Applicants have amended Claims 8 and 13 to more particularly describe the invention. Accordingly, Claims 8-15 are now pending. Applicants request reconsideration of the rejections in view of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Rejection of Claims 8-15

The Office Action rejected Claims 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Landfield et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,632,011 ("Landfield"), and in view of S. Kent, Privacy Enhancements for Internet Electronic Mail, Part II: Certificate Based Key Management, Network Working Group Request For Comments 1422, Feb. 1993 ("Kent"). As Per claim 8, the Office Action stated that Landfield discloses receiving an encrypted email message, decrypting the email message in accordance with encryption data, but fails to disclose extracting signature data from the message, verifying the signature, or processing the e-mail in accordance with the verifying. However, the Office Action stated that Kent discloses those missing features in Page 4, Paragraphs 3 and 4. Applicants have amended Claim 8 to recite that the security manager transmits an email message if the verifying of the signature results in a predetermined result.

Kent does not disclose verifying an extracted signature of a received message and transmitting the message in response to a predetermined result of the verifying. Rather, Kent discloses verifying the validity of signatures acquired from a source outside the message: "Prior to sending an encrypted message (using PEM), an originator must acquire a certificate for each recipient and must validate these certificates." P. 4. With respect to signatures in a received message, Kent discloses manually verifying a signature at a user computer, which is the destination for the message: "Upon receipt of a privacy enhanced message, a recipient validates the originator's certificate..." P. 4. Therefore, there is no transmitting of the message in response to validation of the extracted signature, since the message is already with the destination recipient.

Moreover, Landfield does not disclose transmission that is dependent on an evaluation such as certificate validity evaluation. Rather, Landfield transmits an

encrypted message prior to any message processing such as that of the an administration program which extracts an alias information file. Col. 4, l. 52-Col. 5, l. 8. The operation of the administration program is then terminated. Col. 5, ll. 8-9. Therefore, neither Kent nor Landfield disclose responding to a predetermined result of a signature evaluation by transmitting the processed email message. Accordingly, Claim 8 is allowable over the combination of Landfield and Kent for at least this reason alone.

Claims 9 and 10 depend on Claim 8 and are allowable over the combination of Landfield and Kent for at least the same reasons as provided with respect to Claim 8.

With respect to Claim 13, the Office Action stated that Landfield does not teach determining if a signature is required by reference to applying a signature policy. However, the Office Action stated that Kent discloses such application of a signature policy. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Office Action that Kent applies any policy at all prior to signing an e-mail. In Kent the user retrieves a certificate prior to transmitting a message so as to encrypt the message. P. 4. There is no mention or discussion of a policy being applied by the computer or that the application of a signature is dependent on the result of such application of policy. Therefore, Claim 13 is allowable over the combination of Landfield and Kent for at least this reason alone.

Claims 14 and 15 depend on Claim 13 and are allowable over the combination of Landfield and Kent for at least the same reasons as provided with respect to Claim 13.

SUMMARY

In view of the forgoing supporting remarks, Applicants respectfully request allowance of pending Claims 8-15. This application is now believed to be in a condition for allowance.

If the Examiner wishes to direct any questions concerning this application to the undersigned Applicants' representative, please call the number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,



Guy Perry

Reg. No. 46,194

Attorney for Applicant
(212) 735-3000
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
Four Times Square
New York, NY 10036